2-24-10

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los angeles valley college's

VALLEY STAR

the independent student newspaper



ON THE LINE

DID THE WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM BEAT SANTA MONICA TO HAVE A SHOT AT THE PLAYOFFS?

» 6

lavalleystar.com | February 24, 2010 | Volume 72 Issue 1

VALLEY COLLEGE REACHES OUT TO HAITI

ASU is running a drive to raise supplies for the earthquake victims.

CARL ROBINETTE
STAFF WRITER

Valley College students are doing their part to give aid to the victims of the recent earthquake in Haiti through an Associated Student Union-sponsored donation drive, going on now until March 1.

Food and clothes are being accepted as part of the drive, and the ASU will match whatever students donate. So far there has been a big turn out. One local business associated with ASU President Arthur Minasyan donated 200 pairs of shoes. Donations are being accepted in Campus Center Room 102.

"One of our offices is pretty much packed," said ASU Advisor Elizabeth Ortiz, referring to donated items when asked about the success of the drive.

Plans are being made for the donated items to be picked up by The Salvation Army after the March 1 deadline, according to ASU Commissioner of Evening Division, Kazooba Kawamara, who spearheaded the drive.

"Students really want to help out the community," said Kawamara. "All they need is a chance."

Kawamara has had first-hand experience with human suffering. As a native of a Euganda, he was born into a poverty-stricken country.

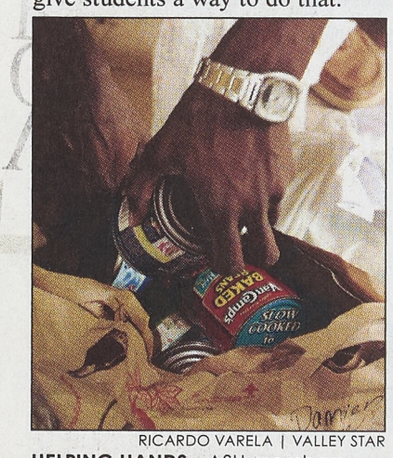
"When I see people suffering on TV it rings home," said Kawamara.

In the six weeks since the earthquake hit Haiti the death toll has risen to about 200,000 people, according to one AP article. About 1.2 million survivors have been left homeless and in need of food, clothes and other medical assistance. Much of the help is coming from the United States.

"I don't know if it makes a difference," said student Estela Hernandez about her plans to donate. "But it's the least I can do."

The need in Haiti will continue as new problems arise for the country and its people everyday. Kawamara says that there may be future discussion to determine what roll the ASU will play in the relief effort.

"We hope that students will continue the giving spirit," said Kawamara. "The ASU is proud to give students a way to do that."

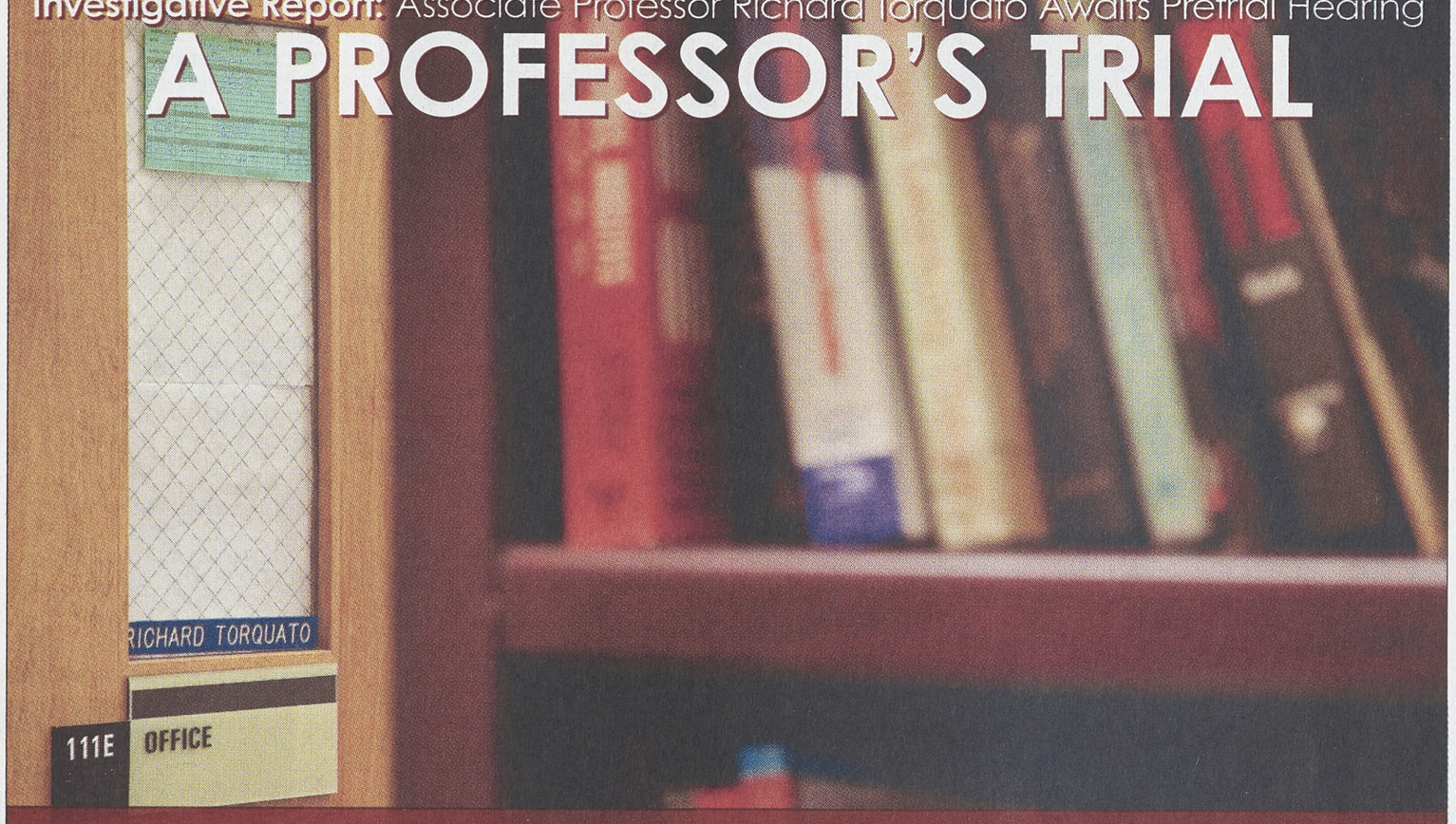


RICARDO VARELA | VALLEY STAR

HELPING HANDS - ASU members collect food donations.

Investigative Report: Associate Professor Richard Torquato Awaits Pretrial Hearing

A PROFESSOR'S TRIAL



Associate Professor of Psychology, Richard Torquato, on leave, is facing charges brought against him in the Fall 2009 semester.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS:

Fall 2009 Semester:
- Arrest is made on campus.
- Placed on leave after arrest.

On or about November 2, 2009
- Complaint filed.

November 20, 2009
- Case filed.

After case is filed
- Obtains private legal counsel from John Friedman.
- Defendant charged by unknown person(s) for following offenses: 647.6(A)(1) / 243.4(E)(1) / 273A(B)

November 23, 2009
- Arrest warrant to issue at Van Nuys Courthouse.

December 3, 2009
- Arraignment and plea at Van Nuys Courthouse.
- Pleads NOT guilty to all counts.

December 29, 2009
- Pretrial hearing at Van Nuys Courthouse.

January 15, 2010
- Continued to pretrial hearing at Van Nuys Courthouse.

February 10, 2010
- Continued to pretrial hearing at Van Nuys Courthouse.

February 25, 2010
- Continued to pretrial hearing at Van Nuys Courthouse.

JOSH SPENCE & LUCAS THOMPSON
VALLEY STAR EDITORS

Valley College Associate Professor Richard Torquato will be in a pretrial hearing at the Los Angeles Superior Court in Van Nuys Thursday stemming from molestation charges levied against him in the Fall 2009 semester.

The charges brought against Torquato are violations of Penal Code 243.4(E)(1), which involves sexual battery, Penal Code 647.6(A)(1), which is defined as molestation of any child under 18 years of age, and 273A (B), a charge of willfully causing a child to suffer any physical pain or mental suffering.

"Because the case is still in litigation we cannot comment at this time, but we can confirm the charges as such," said Los Angeles City Court Media Relations member Frank Mateljan.

Torquato's private counsel John Friedman had no comment for the Valley Star on Tuesday.

Valley's Office of Compliance is also investigating the psychology professor.

"We're in early stages of an investigation, and we don't yet know when it will be solved," said Valley President Sue Carleo.

According to Carleo, Torquato was placed on leave during the latter portion of last semester, but would neither confirm or deny whether the leave is paid.

"He's on leave, let's just say that," Carleo said.

The arrest, according to Van Nuys courthouse documents, took place in November. The arrest was made on campus, but no details of the incident could be given at this time, according to Valley Deputy Ricky Baker.

"Anytime we're arresting somebody, there's probably some danger to the community," Baker said. "And yes, the arrest was made here on campus."

Due to privacy, very few details can be revealed at this time until the investigation regarding Torquato is closed and a judgment has been made.

"It's our responsibility as the college administration to make sure that we do fair and thorough investigations of all matters brought to our attention," said Carleo. "We don't sweep things under the carpet, it's just that a lot of times all parties involved have privacy rights."

Torquato earned his bachelor's degree from Williamette University in Salem, Oregon and received a master's degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He was hired at Valley in 1999.

Carleo said, "I think a general statement to everyone, faculty, staff, students, everyone, is that it is important to speak up."

THE LOW DOWN

VALLEY IS TOO FULL FOR SCHOOL

A plethora of students vie for too few classes.

CRISTINA SERRATO



As the spring semester begins, the murmur of confused and angry students could be heard throughout the packed halls and classrooms of Valley. Recent budget cuts and class reductions have left many students with fewer class options, resulting in high demand for classes that still exist.

"You could have fit two and a half sections with the amount of people, they were standing everywhere," commented Valley student Robert King of his first day in human sexuality class. "It had to be against fire code."

All week, students could be seen standing in the back of classrooms already filled to capacity. Others popping their heads in and out of classes, asking what seems to be the spring semester's golden question: "Adding?" Although the answer for many was a resounding, "No," for the lucky few who were added, many professors found creative solutions to the problem of too few empty spaces. Professors offered sign in sheets with the first seven being added, only the first 5 odd numbers being added, and some even held a BINGO-style lottery, if your number was called you were in.

"My PE95 class was full immediately, so I offered students an alternate section number to add into, but by day two that was full as well," said Coach Dave Buchanan. "People are still coming to request add slips, but I can't help them."

For some Valley students the dilemma of not having the classes they require is a snowball effect. They cannot add classes in order to be full time, if they are not full time they cannot get the financial aid they need, if they cannot get financial aid then they cannot afford to pay for books and supplies to attend the classes they do have. Valley student Christian Hernandez is once such person.

"I can't get the classes I need to be full time, I have been trying to get financial aid for two semesters and still can't. Without the financial aid I can't get my books 'cause I have no money."

According to the Los Angeles Community College District brochure there are over 12,000 classes currently being offered on nine campuses, which include hybrid, co-operative education and online classes. Although the number of classes being offered on campus has been lessened, many colleges such as West Los Angeles Community College are offering more hybrid and online courses to compensate. Valley College has reduced its classes by 10 percent since last spring session and while fewer classes are being offered, more students are attending per class. The actual head count on enrolled and attending students has only gone down by 800 students in the past year, which accounts for about four percent of all students, so Valley, unlike many other community colleges has been able to maintain all its state funding without issue.

The shrinking number of classes has caused a problem for some students and faculty alike and many are preparing themselves for next semesters hardship, while being hopeful that the class reductions are coming to an end.

"Class cuts have been leveled off, fall should be o.k," commented Duane Martin, Administrative Analyst for Valley College. "However students need to be continuing students, enroll early and be smart. Plan in advance and don't wait 'til week two to get into classes."

Email Cristina Serrato at *c.serrato@lavalleystar.com*
Send general comments to *valleystar@lavalleystar.com*

ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

New Faces, New Places

Visit our online site to read articles by our new Online Columnists: Jonathan Seeley & Kate Holzhauer

ONLINE SLIDESHOW



Photos of the Week

Go online to see all photos of life on campus.

ONLINE GALLERY



Tau Alpha Epsilon

Our photographers' take on TAE's carnival.

These features and more can be found in full @ www.lavalleystar.com

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

Valley College's crime report for January 2010.

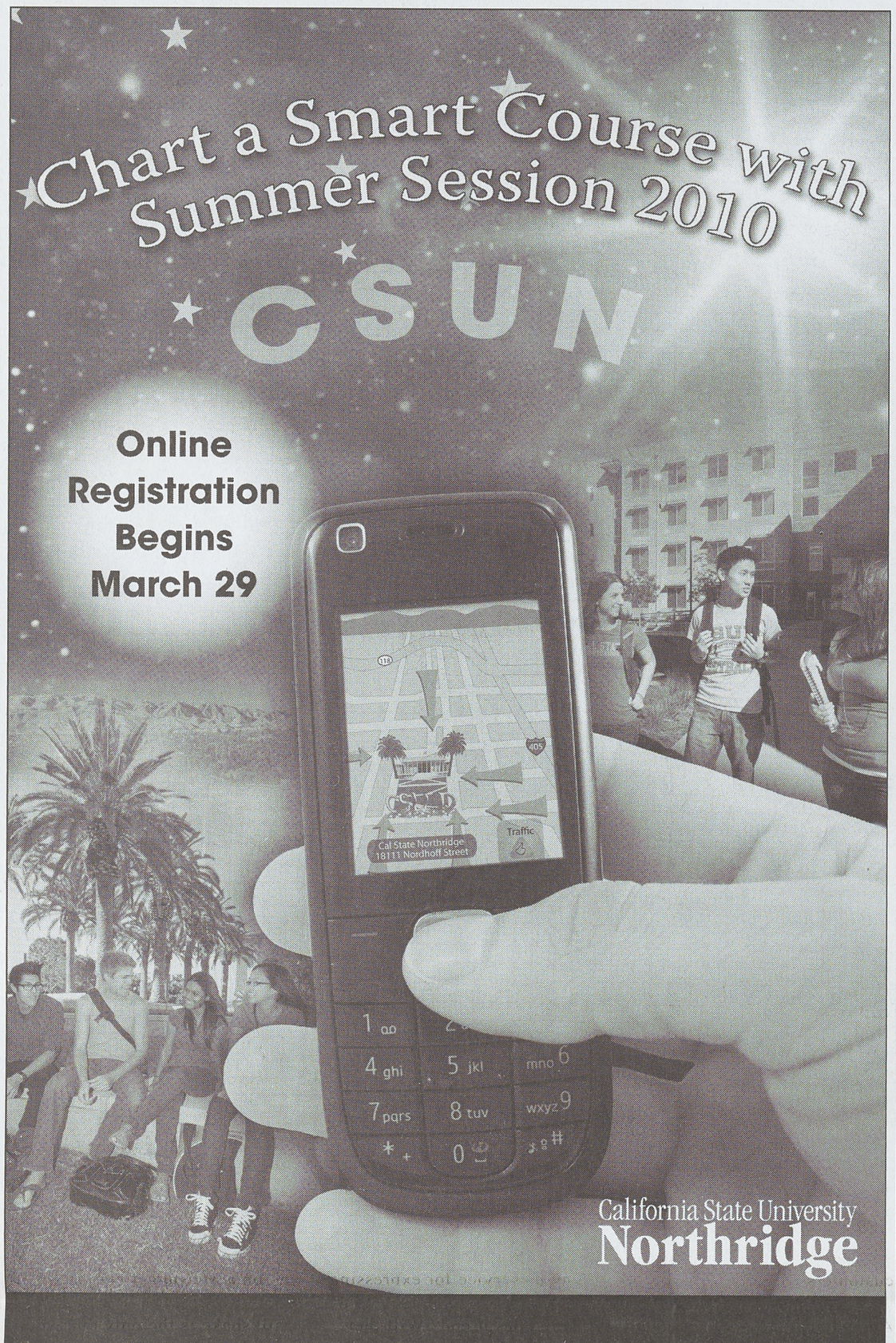
JONATHAN SEELEY
STAFF WRITER

The crime report will be released weekly and inform students of incidents on campus. With cooperation from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Valley College Station the report will be as up-to-date and detailed as possible. Information is taken from the crime stats page on the Sheriff's Department Web site. All averages are derived from stats over the past eight years.

In January there was one case each of battery, grand theft, injury to a student, and hit-and-run. In 2009 Valley College had four cases of battery and 20 cases of grand theft auto during the entire year. On average (over past eight years) 36 students are injured per year.

In January there were two cases each of petty theft, lost property, and traffic collision. On average (over the past eight years) Valley College experiences 37 cases of petty theft and 15 traffic collisions per year. Lost property has an average of 39 incidences a year and only four incidences of property found per year.

In January there were four cases of injury to an employee. In 2009 there were 29 incidences of employee injury with an average of 30 injuries per year over the last eight years.



Take advantage of the large number of Summer Session classes offered beginning May 25. Whatever your academic goals, chances are you'll find a class within the wide selection of listed courses.

Summer Session 2010 is for you if you are a:

- Matriculating CSUN student wanting to accelerate your progress toward a degree;
- Community college student ready for upper degree work;
- Business professional on a part-time degree track, or
- Home-for-the-summer student.

Summer Session Dates

- Summer Session 1:
  May 25, 2010 to August 13, 2010 (12 weeks)
- Summer Session 2:
  May 25, 2010 to July 2, 2010 (First 6 weeks)
- Summer Session 3:
  July 6, 2010 to August 13, 2010 (Second 6 weeks)

The course list is available at
http://tsengcollege.csun.edu/summer.html,
with additional courses listed as they become accessible.

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THE VALLEY STAR STAFF & INFO

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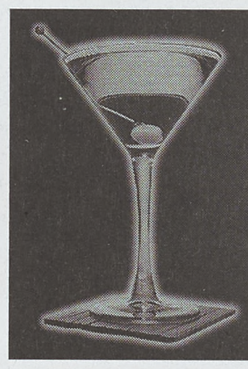
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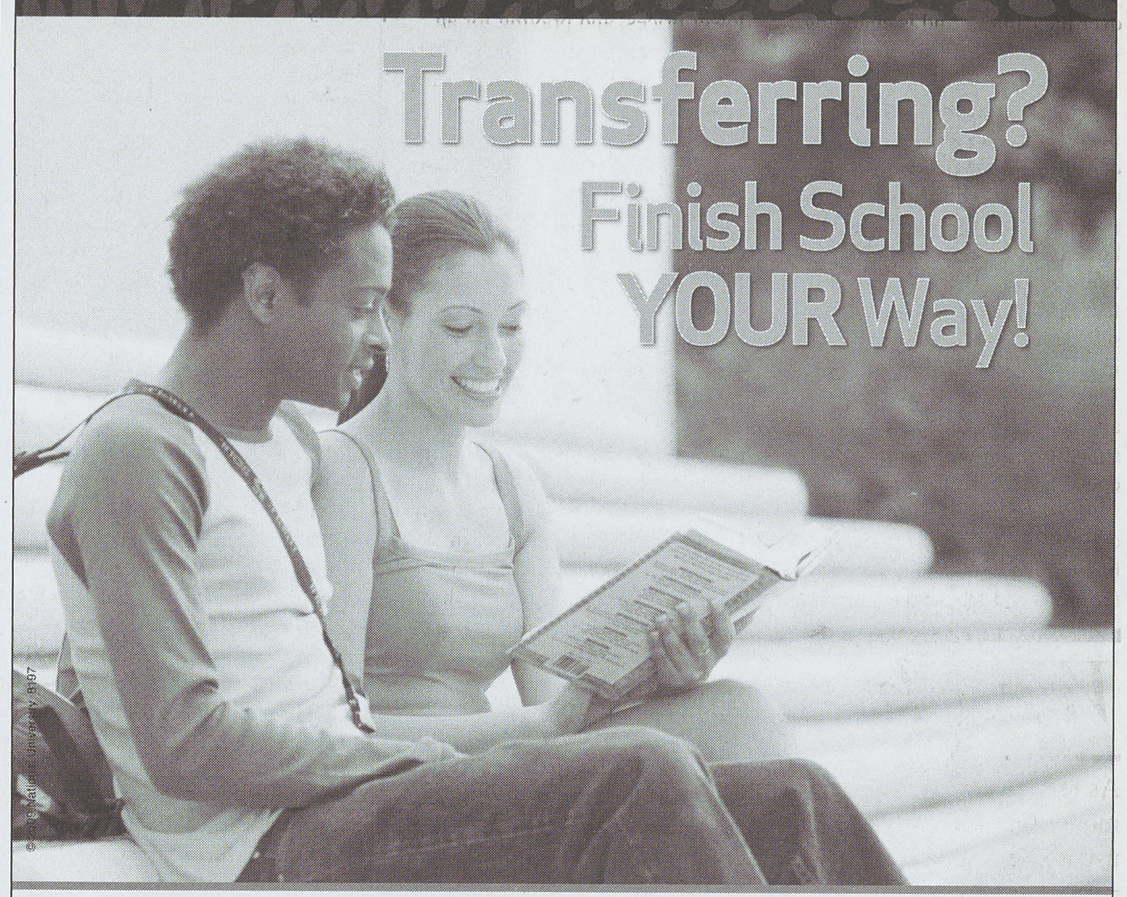
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The views expressed on this page are solely those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Valley Star, its instructors, editors, staff or those of Los Angeles Valley College, its administrators, faculty, staff, or students.

Book Rentals Give Students a Better Alternative

With the economy in tatters, enrollment tripling, and the cost of attending college moving incrementally higher, the idea of renting books, if only to use that extra money for gas, seems elementary.

SUSAN MASHEVICH
STAFF WRITER

Textbooks are a crucial part of any course we as students take, the grade we get, and the overall educational experience we receive from the class. As a new semester begins, books for a full-time student can get very expensive; spending frivolously on books that students will probably only use once seems to be a large concern. Attendance of Valley College students has gone up because of its accessibility in light of current economic conditions, yet many students feel overwhelmed by the exorbitant cost of books.

"Renting is better, it costs less, and makes sense not to waste paper," says Jennifer Morgan, a student who used Chegg.com this semester after just recently hearing about renting books in class. "It's not a guarantee you're gonna sell them all back, and renting provides rewards rather than money," she continued.

In previous semesters students have eagerly searched for alternatives to buying books, such as online used booksellers (e.g. Amazon, Half.com, etc.) but this year it seems a new fad has swept over the campus and is changing the way students obtain their textbooks.

Chegg.com has recently intrigued professors and students at Valley. The website is known as the largest online book rental service, allowing students to rent books for a quarter, semester, or a 60-day rental and advertise the fact that for every book you buy, sell, or rent, a tree will be planted in one of the locations you choose. This is ideal for many budget and environmentally conscience students. From personal experience I've noticed the web site mentioned in most, if not all of my classes. As the textbook shopping begins, students hastily copy down the URL and teachers even post it on the boards.

"We are down about half a million from December from the prior year," explains Claudette Burns, Valley bookstore manager. "If a student buys from Amazon, Chegg, or Half.com they are buying from an individual, not the publisher. When students are buying from us they support the college." Claudette argues that the uncertainty, which comes with buying "from an individual," is that you may not get the correct book or edition. Yet, all of these sites mentioned offer a search engine to find textbooks by their ISBN so the buyer knows what they are getting.

Fortunately, college bookstores are experimenting with alternatives. A book rental system recently implemented by Pierce College, which has not been successful in making profits, is being used as an example for other community colleges. College bookstores do realize the competition of outside sources offering better alternatives for students, and should do more to benefit students.

Although the school bookstore urges students to buy from campus, the bottom line concern for professors is that all their students are able to obtain the text and move on in the course. In the past, some Valley professors would provide photocopies of the relevant sections of the books required; however, due to budget cuts, teachers are no longer allowed to provide copies, leaving students to fend for themselves. Between buying used books at relatively lower prices, and praying for an available copy at the library, alternatives have left students grasping at straws.

It's a bit sad to think an institution could discourage professors from informing their students of better opportunities. Renting requires you to return the book after usage—the prices are lower than any used and especially lower than any new books being sold.

Finding new ways to save and continue with your education is nothing to be ashamed of and needs to be pursued. Students shouldn't be pressured into buying books at the last minute, or trying to go without. In reality the more courses students can afford to take, the it is better for Valley as whole.



AUSTIN CARPENTER, ILLUSTRATOR | VALLEY STAR

THE SIMPLE TRUTH

Does Freedom Come With or Without the Iced Mocha Latte?

The Brady Campaign is doing all it can to ensure the safety of restaurant patrons, but is sacrificing the Second Amendment in lieu of a small barbeque chicken pizza really worth it?

JAMIE NORRIED

"Dear Starbucks,

You are currently allowing people to openly carry guns in your stores. I demand that you stand up for the safety of your customers and bar guns in your coffee shops. Guns don't belong in restaurants where families and children gather. Reverse your corporate decision," reads the petition to Starbucks CEO, Howard Schultz, which the Brady Campaign invites citizens to sign via their website.

The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, a lobbying group, started this petition at the beginning of 2010 to persuade Starbucks to join in the ban against weapon-bearing customers.

According to the Second Amendment, "A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed"...unless you're at a Peet's Coffee & Tea or a California Pizza Kitchen, right?

The Brady Campaign puts on a concerned voice for the citizens by claiming, "It's everyone's right to sit in a restaurant or coffee shop with their families without intimidation or fear of guns, either concealed or openly carried." But why should children and regular citizens be afraid of guns? Perhaps if our children were educated about firearms beginning at a young age, we as a people would respect the weapon, and know when and when not to use it.

If Peet's Coffee & Tea and California Pizza Kitchen can deny us service for expressing our Second Amendment rights, where does it end? Will they deny us service based on our nationality or sexual preference?

"It is refreshing to see yet one more company not requiring law abiding gun owners to go to the back of the bus," says John Pierce, co-founder of OpenCarry.org. "Importantly, Starbucks joins most American corporations in deciding not to discriminate against lawful gun carriers."

Starbucks' defense is that they have their own "existing security protocols in place to handle situations related to safety" in their stores. Perhaps they already have their own militia.

I personally don't mind if the man standing next to me at McDonald's has a gun strapped to his hip, and ammunition in his pocket, because if any unstable hoodlums decide to go on a McNugget massacre, that guy with the rifle and the milkshake is the only one who stands a chance. I just want to know that in about five minutes, I'll be enjoying my French fries instead of getting my head blown off by a psycho who's out "hunting humans."

So thank you Starbucks for upholding our Second Amendment rights, for not caving to lobbyist pressure, and helping me personally breathe easier about ordering a Caramel Frappuccino instead of an Iced Caramel Latte.

Email Jamie Norried at
j.norried@lavalleystar.com
Send general comments to
valleystar@lavalleystar.com

Weighing the Pros and Cons of Living in a Text World

As text messaging becomes increasingly more of a primary communication, do we use it effectively?

BAHNAN YAMIN
STAFF WRITER

Text messaging is becoming the fastest growing part of media convergence. Even more so than the internet, it is the quintessential way for people to communicate with each other without any direct contact. One trillion text messages were sent last year, according to the International Association for the Wireless Telecommunications Industry. That's up about 20 billion over the last three years. While this may be where the future is headed for communication, like all kinds of communication, text messaging has its advantages and disadvantages.

The most important advantages of text messaging are that it constitutes a tool of communication, when other kinds of technologies don't work. It is a tool to inform other people about some information and also to socialize. It's a tool to send a social announcement like the birth of a child. Through it you can send lot of greetings, like holidays and birthday wishes.

It can be very informative especially when you are dealing with totalitarian government. In the last "Green Revolution" in Iran, Twitter played a big role in informing the entire world about what happens in the streets of Iranian cities. The government of Ahmadinejad couldn't cover the repression in the street. I know there are disadvantages for the use of those devices, but the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages.

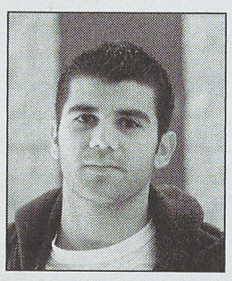
Also the use of text messaging is important for people who have a language impairment, because of their disability to hear. A study, "Language and social factors in the use of cell phone technology by adolescents with and without Specific Language Impairment (SLI)" conducted by Conti-Ramsden,,Durkin, and Simkin found that adolescents with SLI do not exchange text messages as often as their typically developing peers. Social rather than language factors are associated with frequency of cell phone use in adolescents.

If those are the good parts of it, we cannot exclude the disadvantages of text messaging. It constitutes a danger when it disturbs the user from driving or listening to a teacher in a class. The use of it creates an environment of destruction from concentration of the job that we are supposed to perform.

Even though it is prohibited to text when you drive, a lot of teenagers and school students do it. If you observe students in class rooms, you will notice easily that they are text massaging in a fast and distracting way. Those messages are not important, and it can carry only a message of love to a boyfriend or a girlfriend.

>>To read the complete story visit www.lavalleystar.com

VALLEY VIEW | WHAT ALTERNATIVES DO YOU USE OPPOSED TO BUYING TEXTBOOKS FROM THE VALLEY BOOKSTORE?


"I go different places to shop for books, mostly online and I buy used."
- VARZIG APRAHANIAN, POLITICAL SCIENCE


"I try to go to the cheapest place...I go across the street, I go online, whatever works out."
- JUSTIN BILLINGS, GENERAL EDUCATION


"I rent books from Chegg.com...I just rent (the book) and give it back at at the end."
- ANDREW JARAMILLO, ACCOUNTING


"Mostly I shop online... Amazon is a good deal."
-STEPHEN DOYLE, RESPIRATORY THERAPY


"I go to amazon...comparing the used books to the bookstore here,the books online are cheaper."
- KATHLEEN DELOS REYES, ANIMAL BIOLOGY

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

Letters to the editor can be sent to editor@lavalleystar.com or submitted online at www.lavalleystar.com. Letters must be limited to 300 words and may be edited for content. Full name and contact information must be supplied in order for letters to be printed. Send by Thursday for the following week's issue.

LAVC Events

February
Wednesday, 24th

ASU Club Day - Sponsored by the Associated Student Union
@ 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. (Monarch Square)
Contact: Associated Student Union (818) 778-5516

CSU Financial Aid Workshop - Sponsored by the Career/Transfer Center
@ 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. (Career/Transfer Center – Administration 126)
Contact: Career/Transfer Center (818) 947-2646

Speech Team Showcase - Sponsored by the LAVC Speech Team
@ 6 - 8 p.m. (Cafeteria Conference Room)
Contact: Duane Smith (818) 778-5537

Thursday, 25th

LAVC Blood Drive - Sponsored by the Student Health Center & the American Red Cross
@ 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. (Blood Mobile located next to the Allied Health & Science Center)
Contact: Sonia Nodal (818) 947-2918

Groundhog Job Shadow Day Orientation Meeting - Sponsored by Career/Transfer Center
@ 1 - 2 p.m. (Career/Transfer Center – Administration 126)
Contact: Career/Transfer Center (818) 947-2646

Friday, 26th

LAVC Job Club - Sponsored by Job Training
@ 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. (Faculty Lounge)
Contact: Dale Beck (818) 947-2927 or beckdr@lavc.edu

Sunday, 28th

"The Myth of 2010" - With speaker James Underdown hosted by LAVC Astronomy Group
@ 7:45 - 9 p.m. (Planetarium)
Cost: Free
Contact: LAVC Astronomy Group (818) 947-2335
http://lavcastrogroup.org/

! THINK TRANSFER

FAFSA 2010-2011 Filing Period ends March 2!
Apply at: www.fafsa.ed.gov

Updating UC Fall 2010 Applications
Online: www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/appupdate

February
Wednesday, 24th

Mount St. Mary's College Rep
@ 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
CSU Financial Aid Workshop
@ 5:30 - 6:30pm

Thursday, 25th

University of Phoenix Rep
@ 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Monarch Square
Job Shadow Orientation
@ 1 - 2 p.m.
Sign-up to "shadow" a professional in a career you want to learn more about.

March
Monday, 1st

UCLA Rep
@ 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
How to Transfer Workshop
@ 1 - 2 p.m. & 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

All events held in the Career/Transfer Center (Administration 126) unless otherwise indicated.

For Sign-up and further inofrmation
Call 818.947.2646.

FOOD FIGHT: HUGO'S VS. HENRY'S

An on-going battle continues between taco stands local to Valley college students.

KATE HOLZHAUER
STAFF WRITER

Taco stands have become iconic fixtures in the Los Angeles culinary scene, providing cheap and convenient eats to people from all walks of life. Within a five minute drive of Valley College lie two very different versions of the classic taco stand: Hugo's Tacos and Henry's Tacos.

Pulling in to Henry's Tacos, the first thing that strikes a diner is the classic sign that has lit up the corner of Moorpark and Tujunga for over 30 years. The food, however, might make the diner wonder why. The menu is limited and overpriced for what it is—a small selection of tacos and burritos filled either with Henry's signature ground beef or with beans that taste suspiciously canned. While the crispy taco comes looking like a drive-through taco, the soft taco comes looking exactly like a burrito wrapped up in an oversized flour tortilla. Want salsa? You have one option: Henry's hot sauce, a not-quite-so-spicy, tomato-based sauce.

On the other hand, Hugo's Tacos serves up fresh, nicely cooked meals. Its menu is big and the variety of food for meat lovers and vegetarians alike is impressive. The much-lauded salsa negra is overpoweringly smoky and lacking in salt, but the understated pico de gallo is fresh and flavorful. The soft taco at Hugo's comes in tender corn tortillas, with fillings to please carnivores and herbivores alike. Although the carnitas seem to have forgone melt-in-your-mouth fattiness in order to fit into Hugo's healthy menu, the al pastor is perfectly seasoned, the steak is tender, and the vegetarian fillings don't leave the diner wanting for meat.

Although Henry's and Hugo's both serve Mexican food, their approach is vastly different. The common thread between them is burgers that should be avoided at all cost. Hugo's serves relatively authentic healthy Mexican food while Henry's serves a competent, but uninspiring rendition of Americanized fast food tacos. Both close at 10 p.m. so they won't be open for any post-party snacks. But if you are looking for a good lunch or fast dinner option then Hugo's is the better bet. Straight down Coldwater at the 101 freeway, Hugo's is convenient as it is delicious.



ANGELA BEACH | VALLEY STAR

NEW KID IN TOWN - Hugo's Tacos in Studio City hails an "authentic Mexican-style taco with the Hugo's family of restaurants twist." Situated on a bustleing street corner in the Los Angeles Suburb of Studio City, California Hugo's Tacos is a welcome addition to the neighborhood.



ANGELA BEACH | VALLEY STAR

OLD TIME FAVORITE - Henry's Taco's in North Hollywood, CA. For years people have said that Henry's isn't an "authentic taco" however, since its inception in 1961 it has remained a favorite in this Los Angeles Suburb.

ARE YOU PROTECTING YOUR SEXUAL HEALTH?

Condom Day Informs Students of testing clinics

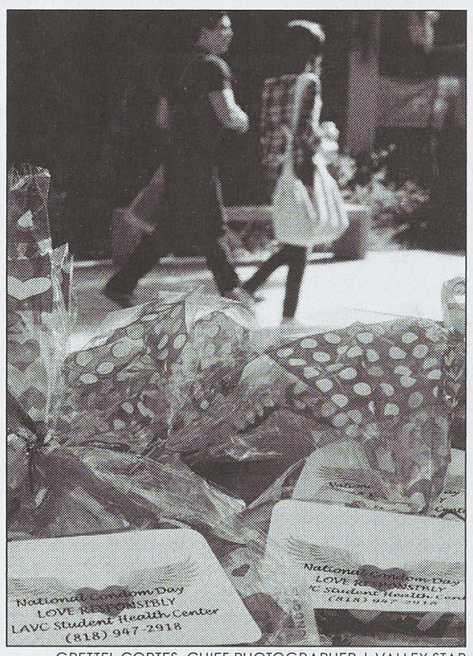
DAVID MOTTE
STAFF WRITER

Are you protecting your sexual health? That is what the Valley College Student Health Center is asking its students. Last Thursday, in an effort to promote National Condom Day on campus, the health center presented "Love Responsibly," an event intentionally held around Valentine's Day to inform students about protecting their sexual health.

Named after the most popular contraceptive, National Condom Day is aimed to raise awareness of safe sex and the reasons why you should practice it. The Student Health Center set up shop in Monarch Square on Thursday, handing out condoms and STD awareness pamphlets to students passing by. "'Love Responsibly' is a great theme that we try to convey at the Student Health Center," said Valley's physician assistant, Sonia Nodal. "I always express to my patients and students that HIV and STDs do not discriminate. Just because you think the person's nice, it doesn't have anything to do with their previous sexual activity."

Gift bags were also handed out which, aside from more condoms and candy, contained cards furnishing students with the names and addresses of four local off-campus clinics providing free HIV and STD test screenings.

Unfortunately, due to some unforeseen complications at the health center, most students throughout the day were greeted by a vacant table covered with condoms and pamphlets, without anyone to provide information. Many students seemed too embarrassed to approach the unattended condoms, but some curious onlookers stopped to gaze at the literature. Even the smallest amount of information on the subject of safe sex can be beneficial.



GRETTEL CORTES, CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER | VALLEY STAR

LOVING RESPONSIBLY - In recognition of National Condom Day, the Health Center distributes information and condoms to students on Feb 18.

"We usually have a bigger turnout," said medical assistant Maria Sandoval. "But because of all the chaos [at the health center] today, we weren't able to prepare properly."

If youmissed "Love Responsibly," have no fear because all the information provided can be retrieved from the friendly staff at the Student Health Center, along with free condoms which are provided daily.

Be sure to catch upcoming health-related events such as "Longevity of Wellness" screenings in March, and "Denim Day" in April.

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TWO CENTS FROM SPENCE

DICAPRIO AND SCORSESE SIMMER IN "SHUTTER ISLAND"

Director Martin Scorsese and Leonardo DiCaprio colabortate for a fourth time as they present the time piece thriller Shutter Island.



JOSH SPENCE

The genius of Martin Scorsese is his ability to tell the same essential story about a man on the brink while adding nuance to the character and monsoons of drama in such a way that the material remains fresh and the audience remains enraptured.

The prolific director delivers again with the achingly gorgeous "Shutter Island." Set against the backdrop of Cold War paranoia and Nazi nightmares, U.S. Marshall Teddy Daniels (Leonardo DiCaprio) ferries onto the infamous island, a solitary prison that houses only the most criminally insane inmates, in search of an escaped prisoner.

Roles get reversed as the hunter becomes the hunted when Daniels becomes trapped in a psychological and philosophical game of cat and mouse that makes the audience question the parameters of sanity and freedom.

DiCaprio gives his best performance since 2004's "The Aviator." It's not the dialogue or the accent used that makes this performance great, but rather the visceral emotion the actor exudes on screen that conveys the desperation and raw anxiety of his character to the audience.

Mark Ruffalo is dependable as ever playing Daniels' sidekick, U.S. Marshall Chuck Aule. These two make a great pair given that DiCaprio brings the audience in almost first person while Ruffalo gives subtlety and cognizance of the bigger picture.

Ben Kingsley, Emily Mortimer, Patricia Clarkson and Michelle Williams are supporting characters that actually do their job quite ably as actors who help further the story rather than distract from it. Kingsley plays Dr. John Cawley, the island's chief psychologist, and adds necessary mystique fitting for a noir film. Williams plays equal siren and demon as Daniels' wife, while Mortimer and Clarkson combine to play the young and old missing inmate, Rachel Solando. These two add tremendous character depth to Solando making what could be an otherwise mundane or stereotypical character in the film a showstopping performance. But again this is to be expected from a Scorsese picture.

This is not to say that "Shutter Island" is Scorsese's best picture—that honor still belongs to "Goodfellas" and "Casino."

The argument at the heart of the film asks the question: Is it better living a life with the mindset of ignorance as bliss or accepting reality as horror? This ethos is something new to the Scorsese arsenal and it pays big dividends. The idea of watching the madness unfold not only adds more drama to the film but drives home the themes of guilt and paranoia to a more personal level.

After giving an American spin to the Hong Kong film "Internal Affairs" and helming a concert film in "Shine A Light," Scorsese brings his keen eye to film noir. While it may be lost on the mainstream audience, film connoisseurs will appreciate the pacing, camera work and thoughtful homages to all things Bogartian in this film. While the director has gained notoriety as of late for his recent findings in the technology aspect of film preservation, "Shutter Island" is proof that he can do that artistically as well.

In the current film environment of "Valentine's Day," "When in Rome" and "Copout," this film is certainly not to be missed.

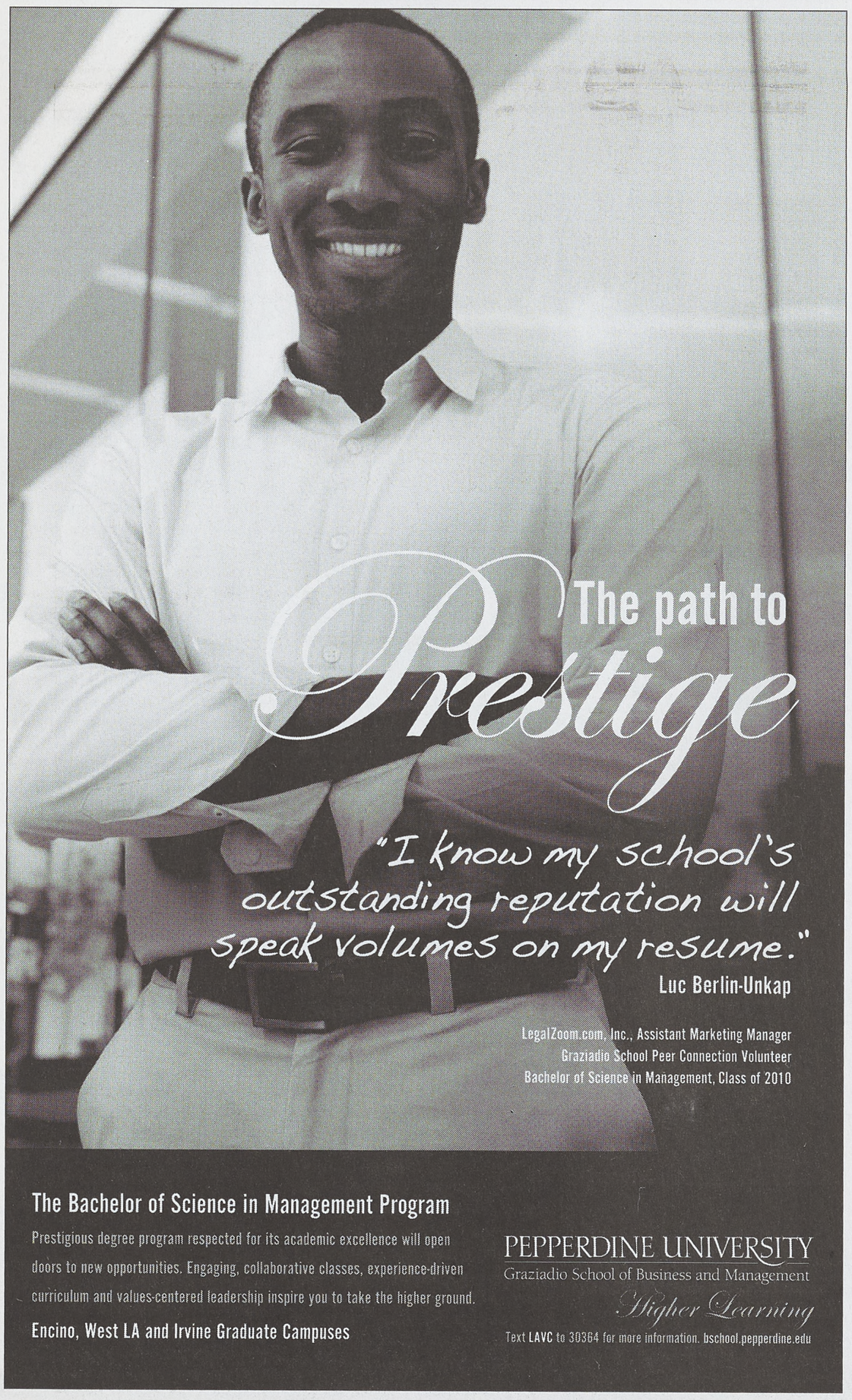


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Send general comments to
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DEPRESSION AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Academic pressures, changes in social life and new financial responsibilities can lead to the onset of depression and feelings of impending doom in college students.

KELLY DAVIS
STAFF WRITER

With 20 percent of the population suffering from depression, or "living in a black hole," as it's commonly described, it is bound to have a major effect on college students, especially since the majority of those diagnosed with mental illness begin to experience signs between the ages of 18 and 24.

According to Psychology Today, the plague of mental illness is off the charts on college campuses. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) claims that common stressors introduced with normal college life can lead to major mood disorders. These stressors include greater academic demands, difficult financial responsibilities, changes in social life, exposure to new ideas, people and temptations, and anxiety over facing life after graduation.

"If students do not feel adequate or prepared to cope with the new environment of a college campus, they could easily become susceptible to depression and anxiety," said Harrison Davis, Ph.D., assistant professor of counseling at North Georgia College & State University.

Valley College offers personal counseling free to students, when issues begin to affect their ability to perform well in classes. This service is located in the Student Health Center in Valley's North Gym and is paid for by the required health fee each semester.

"The counseling is very valuable to students because many don't have insurance so they haven't had any access to mental health services in the past," said Dr. Carl King, Valley's psychologist, who is on campus 20 hours a week providing personal counseling to students in need.

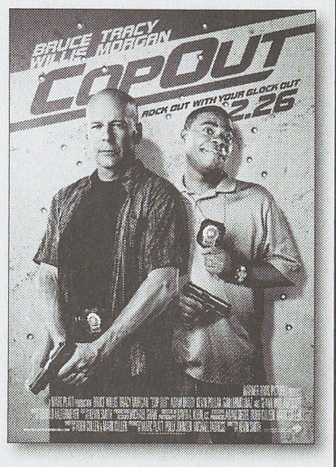
Of the 20 percent of Americans diagnosed with major depression, only about half are receiving treatment, and an even lower number are receiving adequate care. As stated by a survey conducted by NIMH, African-Americans and Mexican-Americans have the lowest rates of depression care. The most common reasons for not seeking treatment are financial concerns and the stigmas believed to be associated with depression. This attitude only reinforces the stigma and makes life more difficult for those suffering.

Depression, like many illnesses, affects the entire person physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Biological changes take place, causing a lasting state of distress, persisting over a period of time. Severe depression, which can be very debilitating, interferes with the ability to initiate, enjoy and perform various activities.

For those struggling with feelings of helplessness, irritability, restlessness; loss of interest in activities; trouble working, studying, eating, sleeping and having fun; loss of energy; self-loathing and concentration problems, there is help available. At the very least, students can call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800) 237-TALK (8255), which in addition to being a crisis line, also offers students a place they can call to get advice or just have someone to talk to.

@THE MOVIES

OPENING THIS WEEKEND



COP OUT

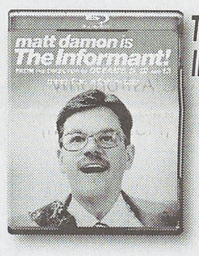
BRUCE WILLIS & TRACY MORGAN

TOP 5 PLAYING:

- *SHUTTER ISLAND: $40.2M+*
- *VALENTINE'S DAY: $17.1M+*
- *AVATAR: $16.1M+*
- *THE LIGHTNING THIEF: $15M+*
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MUSIC



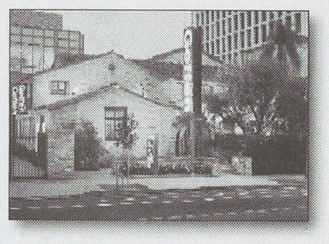
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- *ERLAND AND THE CARNIVAL - ERLAND AND THE CARNIVAL*
- *TAPE DECK MOUNTAIN - GHOST*

CONCERTS & THEATRE



- *GOODIE MOB: FEB. 27 CLUB NOKIA*
- *DREAM GIRLS: FEB. 24-28 AHMANSON THEATRE*
- *ALBERTA BALLET: FEB. 26-27 ROYCE HALL - UCLA*
- *WRECKS: MAR. 3 AUDREY SKIRBALL KENIS THEATRE AT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE*
- *THE COLOR PURPLE: FEB. 24-28 PANTAGES THEATRE*
- *THE SUBJECT WAS ROSE: FEB. 24-28 MARK TAPER FORUM*
- *THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES: FEB. 24-28 GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE*

STANDING OUT ON SOPHOMORE NIGHT

The playoff-bound Monarchs locked in their seed Saturday night defeating Santa Monica 76-67.

LUCAS THOMPSON
MANAGING EDITOR

The stage was set. As the seven Valley College sophomores approached mid-court with their parents Saturday night, a win would mean two things: going out on top and having a chance at playoffs.

Controlling the game for the majority of regulation, the Monarchs managed to fight off any momentum the visiting Corsairs showed. In a physical and emotional battle throughout, Valley defeated Santa Monica 76-67.

"Well the guys played…they competed throughout the game," Head Coach Virgil Watson said. "We had a couple bad lapses in the first half…but then we fought that back and then we competed all the way through to the end of the second half."

Physical game play and hard fouls defined the game as the Monarchs began with a quick open lay-up. Breaking the full court press Santa Monica ran early in the game, Valley acquired a 20-11 lead with 9:53 left in the first period. This was punctuated on a dunk by center Andrey Orlov over Corsair freshmen center Bryant Crowder.

Gaining control on defense, combined with offensive composure and control from sophomore guard Rodney Hudson, the Corsairs managed a 15-7 run tying the game at 27 heading into the half.

The start of the second half gave Santa Monica their first lead of the game—a two-point lead that would not last long. Valley's patience on offense and half court press on defense frustrated the Corsairs who trailed the remainder of the evening. Though coming within two points on several occasions the Monarchs had an answer for every opposition Santa Monica posed.

"We all came together and played hard," Valley guard Robert Brown said. "We knew we had to play hard to make it to the playoffs (and) this is one of the big games to make it."

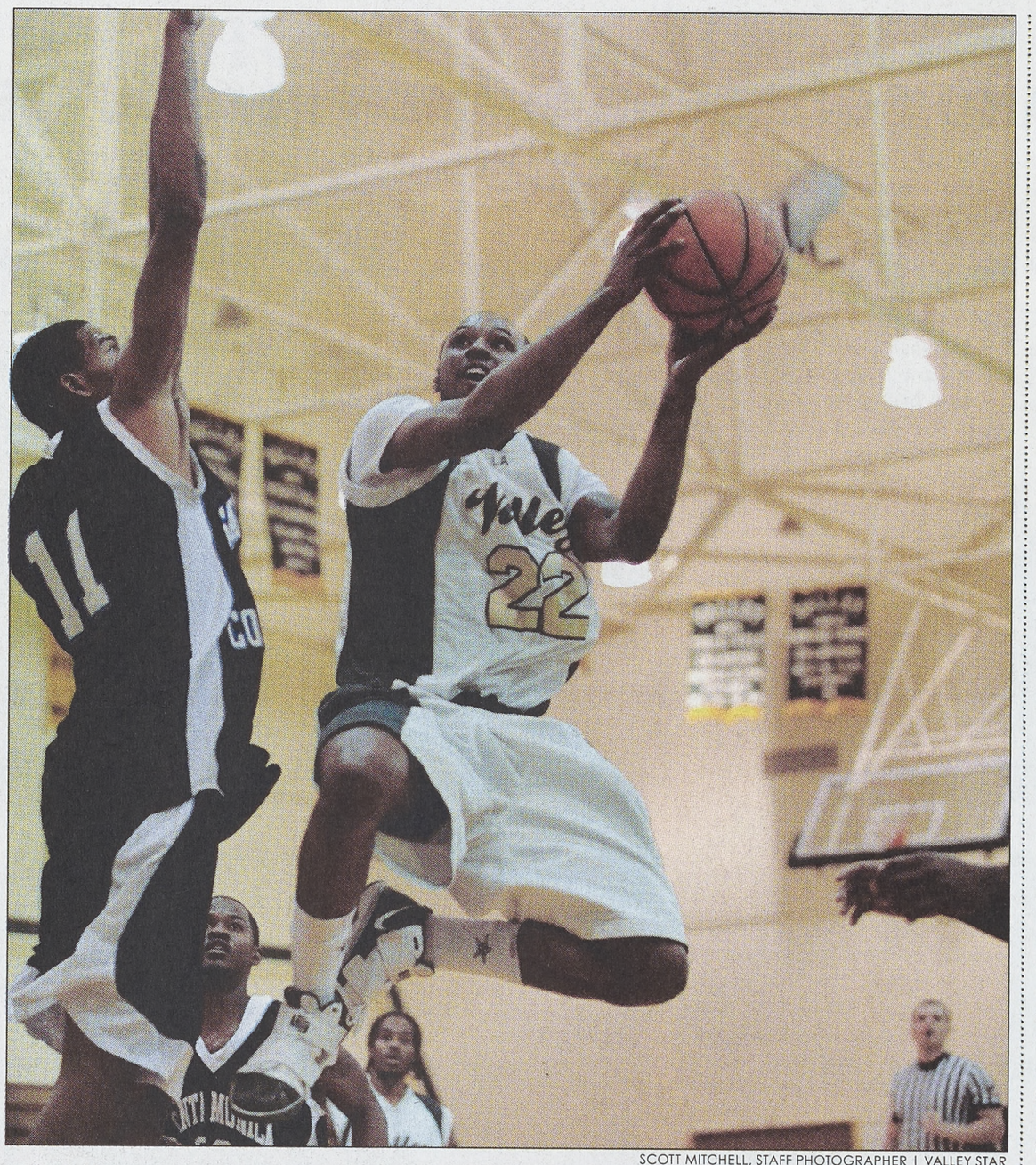
Great bench play from Valley and the consistent rotation of Andrey Orlov and Chris Lenik dealt the Corsairs a fresh-legged opponent in the Monarchs throughout the game.

Half way into the second period early stages of Corsair frustration was capitalized on by big plays from the Monarchs. Three pointers from Jerome Lowe and Chris Lenik came at clutch moments.

With minutes left Robert Brown maneuvered between two Corsair defenders drawing the foul and the lay-up. The simple grin he expressed as he arose from the floor spelled defeat for the disheartened Corsair team.

"Valley just won the game tonight, that's the only thing I can say," Santa Monica Head Coach Jerome Jenkins said. "We got a few stops, they got a few put-backs and they kind of got away from us a little bit…so you got to give them credit, they won the game tonight."

The victory confirms a playoff appearance for the Monarchs tonight at 7 p.m. against Mira Costa, which are ranked 19th in southern California. Valley finishes with a 13-13 season record and a 6-6 conference record, ranking 14th in Southern California.



SCOTT MITCHELL, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER | VALLEY STAR
FLYING HIGH- Jerome Lowe, driving to the basket, lays it up over Santa Monica freshmen center, Bryant Crowder.

CORSAIRS SPOIL MONARCH HOPES

Women's Basketball lost 60-58 in last Saturday's final game against Santa Monica College.

RUBI MARTINEZ
STAFF WRITER

Santa Monica made the final seconds feel like hours. Using all of their remaining three timeouts in the final seconds of the game, hopes of a playoff berth were halted by the visiting Corsairs who defeated the Monarchs 60-58 Saturday night.

"I always save the time outs for situational stuff and thank god we had them…we got lucky and got it," Santa Monica Head Coach Lydia Strong said.

With this loss the Monarchs close their season against the Santa Monica Corsairs. Six minutes into the game, Valley fell 12 points behind the Corsairs as the confused Monarch squad tried to adjust to the Santa Monica game plan.

Despite the game being a melee of foul after technical foul, committed by both teams, Valley managed to work their way back into the game tying it at 38 with 12:23 left in regulation.

"We started rough, we weren't making shots and we had a lot of turnovers," Valley Co-Captain Chriselle Toloma said. "But during the second half we managed to break it up and amended the game."

This was the second loss of the season for Valley against the Corsairs, which were defeated 73-63 in a meeting earlier in the season.

According to Corsairs Team Captain Karlia Batalla, the Monarchs' performance in this game was different from the last.

"They played well compared to last game we played them, they played hard the whole game (and) they made it hard for us to win," Batalla said.

Though it ended on a bad note, Valley Head Coach Jay Werner feels optimistic of the season despite the number of W's in the win column.

"From November to now, we are light years different: we got better." Werner said.

Monarchs closed the season with a 9-15 record taking 4th place in the Western State Southern Division with a record of 6-6. The loss to Santa Monica makes playoffs unattainable for the Valley squad.



SCOTT MITCHELL, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER | VALLEY STAR
TOO FAST- Briana Smythe passes by Corsair defenders for an open shot.

PLAY TOGETHER, PLAY HARD, AND PLAY SMART

Valley's Women's Head Basketball Coach, Jay Werner, exercises teamwork and academics.

GUADALUPE GONZALEZ
STAFF WRITER

Women's basketball Head Coach Jay Werner has always been into athletics, playing football while at Agoura High School and then Pierce College. Even though he regularly played street basketball, it was not until he attended San Diego State University from 1978 to 1979, when ESPN first started that he was intrigued in college basketball. He remembers being up until "two or three in the morning all the time," watching the new cable sports channel.

"I just love basketball; it's a high energy sport," said Werner. "It's a cool sport to coach, especially when you have a team who agrees with your philosophy."

Play together, play hard, play smart: that's the philosophy Werner instills in his teams. This season, the women's basketball team started with one sophomore and nine freshmen. "The freshmen played like freshman," he said, referring to the common injuries in the first games. "But we played hard and got it together."

Dale Beck, Valley's sports information director and public address anouncer at home football and basketball games, said he sees "a distinct change" in this team.

"I'm now seeing a team effort," he claimed. "[Coach Werner] is excellent and has got a great work ethic. I've seen what he's done to develop the team this year."

Werner started coaching at Polytechnic High School and is currently also a full-time physical education teacher there. He has been coaching the boys' varsity basketball team for 11 years.

Beginning in 2000, he was assistant coach at Valley for four years, becoming the interim men's head coach in the 2003-04 season. He then returned to school for a master's degree so that he could teach and coach. In 2009 Valley offered him the head coaching position of the women's basketball team.

"He is a good coach," said post-forward Christine Hernandez, a freshman at Valley College majoring in physical therapy. She met Coach Werner when she attended Polytechnic High. "He gets more to the point…I'm happy he's our coach here."

Hernandez is testament to the success of Werner's athletic philosophy, saying, "We've had our ups and downs, but it's a good season. We've improved a lot since the beginning. We've come together as a team."



SCOTT MIITCHELL, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHEER | VALLEY STAR
LOOKING ON - Women's Head Coach Jay Werner looks on as his team battles Santa Monica.

ANALYZE THIS

WHEN YOU'RE TIGER, YOU APOLOGIZE ON YOUR TIME

After three months of silence, Tiger woods returns to the spotlight, this time for an apology.

LUCAS THOMPSON



After Tiger Woods' Friday press conference and apology to the media, one thing is certain: he should have invested in a teleprompter.

Looking up almost as often as he looked down, Woods' apology and statements were obviously not on his mind in the three-month hiatus he took from the media while attending an out-patient therapy facility which was, according to Woods, to treat his problems with sex addiction.

The ingenuous feel of the press conference mixed with his presentation of statements was almost unbearable to watch. I have personally seen elementary presentations on George Washington that were more genuine, fluid, and presentable than the machine-like effort Woods displayed to the entire world this past Friday.

"I have a long way to go," Woods said. "But have taken my first steps in the right direction."

Amongst the several expected and clichéd comments that match the above, Woods denied allegations that his wife struck him the night of his accident or that any domestic violence has ever taken place. He also shot down suspicions that he has ever used performance-enhancing drugs. Ironically he did not deny the use of sex-enhancing drugs (luckily he was not sponsored by Viagra or Cialis).

Though this media frenzy does not help Tiger's reputation, the way in which he has handled it has only made the situation worse. The three-month silence, which was decidedly a good idea from his public relations team, has now blown up in his face. The suspicions and allegations in this scandal could have been nipped in the bud if the media-savvy Woods would have set the record straight from the get-go.

Take Charles Barkley, for instance, who came out with this comment within a 24-hour period of a DUI arrest early last year in Arizona: "I am disappointed that I put myself in this situation, the Scottsdale police were fantastic, I will not comment any further as it is a legal matter." Barkley then made several comments, apologized, and squashed the incident before any rumors, other scandals and or allegations could be made.

We thought Woods would have learned his lesson from A-Rod who said about his cousin injecting him, "I didn't think they were steroids," later admitting, "I knew we weren't taking Tic Tacs." I think I speak for everyone when I say a simple apology in both circumstances would have been a better start.

As with Kobe, A-Rod, McGwire, and Clinton, Tiger will soon be back on top with his devious past left behind him.

"This is an asset that's currently in crisis, so we will do everything we can to protect that asset," Yankees General Manager Brian Cashman said of Rodriguez. "If this is Humpty Dumpty, we've got to put him back together again, to get back up on the wall."

In this case we will have to get Tiger back on the tee, so to speak. Unfortunately in order to do so Tiger's wife, Elin, will have to survive several mind-numbing fake apologies while her son, Charlie, helps his dad on 'how to use bullet points.'

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